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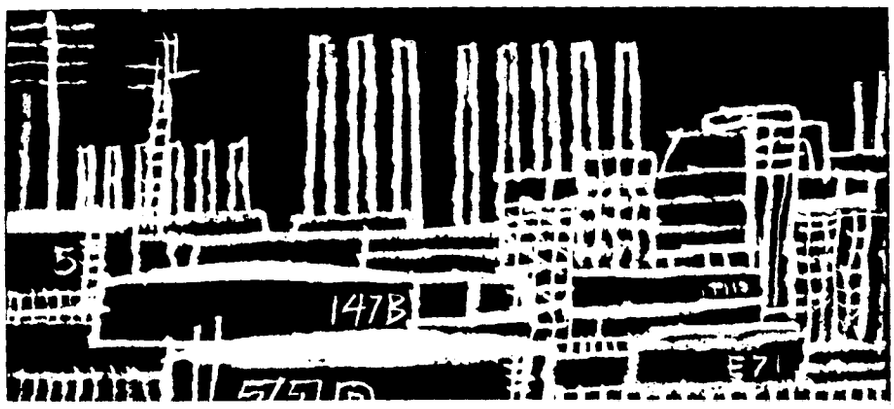

THE NEW ECONOMICS

Edward T. Chase

LANGUAGE, MYTH AND MR. UPDIKE

Anthony Burgess

SUSPENSE IN FRANCE

Stanley Hoffmann

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Sign of the times: Novena Notes, whose circulation has dropped from 600,000 to 50,000, will cease publication later this month. The editor, Father Patrick M. McNamara, O.S.M., commented: "The spiritual climate has changed today so that forms of devotion which were acceptable to an older generation are no longer acceptable to this generation . . . when novenas were very popular in the early 1940's, they provided a marvelous opportunity for the people to come together and pray and sing in their own language. At the time it was not possible in the liturgy; now it is, and the liturgy is filling in the gap previously occupied by novenas."

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The pre-regimented Catholic: The U.S. Marines have announced that girls from Catholic schools and colleges are easier to adapt to military life. Major Martha A. Cox, who is in charge of Marine Woman Office Selection in New York City, says it's because they are prepared for strict obedience, respect for titles and anonymity of dress. Another Marine officer added: "These girls lean toward a disciplined life."

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A Boycott Committee (1316 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco) has been formed to support the strike of the farm workers against the grape growers of Delano, California. If you wish to support the boycott, do not buy any Schenley liquor, or any of the following brands: I. W. Harper, Ancient Age, J. W. Dant, Old Charter, Dewar's White Label, O.F.C., Macnaughton, Order of Merit, Long John, Carioca rum, cherry heering, Seager's gin, Coronet VSQ brandy, Coates Plymouth gin, Samovar, or any wines labeled Roma, Cresta Blanca and Dubonnet.

•

Numbers game at St. John's: How many teachers are observing the strike? On the first day, the Administration said only 3 teachers were absent without excuse. Hours later, it said 40 were out. On January 5, the Administration told the New York *Times* that 52 were out, and the New York *Post*, 43. Forty were absent on January 8, according to Father Tinnelly. When a *Herald Tribune* reporter acquired St. John's reports to the State Department of Education, Father Tinnelly admitted that the 40 figure was actually 76 (including 22 excused absences). A recent St. John's press release said that 69 teachers were absent without excuse on January 5, which was 17 more than it had told the *Times* and 26 more than it had told the *Post*. The same press release said the total of unexcused absences "dropped sharply" as of Monday, January 10. Yet the *revised* figures of the Administration show unexcused absences of 54 for Friday, January 7, and 56 for Tuesday, January 11, thus "dropping sharply" from 54 all the way down to 56. Two weeks later, after various announcements of failing support for the strike, the Administration announced it had sent out 69 letters ordering missing teachers to come back immediately. Even if we assume the highest previous Administration estimate to be true (69 unexcused absences for January 5) this would mean no attrition among the strikers occurred for three entire weeks, which would make the "sharp drops" untrue.

Actually, there has been some attrition, but from a base two or three times larger than the Administration has admitted. Counting the dismissed teachers, an average of 168 teachers were out each day for the first ten days, and the strikers have lists to prove it.

•

What are the biggest deterrents to a Communist takeover in the United States? According to *The Councilor*, a right-wing newspaper out of Shreveport, La., there are two: "1) The fact that many Americans—especially Southerners and Westerners – have weapons in their homes and know how to use them, and 2) residents of most Communist nations have little background in the use of firearms and are psychologically unprepared to use them. To overcome these problems, Leftists have launched a two-prong drive gradually to disarm U. S. households while teaching Communists intense hatred of white Christians, and how to use rifles."

•

From an interview with Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, conducted by John Cogley and published in the February issue of *McCalls:*

Cogley: Do you think that Christianity is unique among religions in its claim to truth, in its claim to be a revelation? In other words, I am putting to you the question that Jesus Himself put to Peter: "Who do men say I am?"

Dr. Niebuhr: When religions claim to be absolute because they have a revelation from God, I'm as skeptical as the village atheist, because when you say, "I believe this to be true because Christ is the incarnation of God, the Son of God," immediately I become a Jew, and I say, "Look, we Jews regard Jesus as a historic figure in the prophetic tradition. He was a very wise and good man, and He died on the Cross." The early church and Saint Paul thought that this death—the whole drama—was a significant disclosure of the judgment and mercy of God. I agree with Paul and the early church in saying that the symbol of Christ's death is religiously meaningful; but if anybody says, "This is the absolute truth," then—

Cogley: Pardon me, but what do you mean here by "absolute truth"? Are you saying it is not historic fact, or are you saying that there is no truth in the history here that transcends history? I don't quite know what you mean.

Dr. Niebuhr: I'd say that the historical occasion of the drama of Christ's life and death is a peg, if you will, in which all the questions about the ultimate mercy and the ultimate judgment are answered for the early church and for Paul.

JOHN LE

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CORRESPONDENCE

"Bankruptcy of the Liberals"

Chatham, N.J.

To the Editors: I have read with great interest the Oglesby piece "Bankruptcy of the Liberals" (January 7) and the response of editor Steinfels. May I commend you for the selection and publication of these pieces. For it has always seemed to me that one of the noblest features of liberalism and one which proves its basic saneness is its willingness to accept diversity and debate from within.

This is one of the reasons that Mr. Oglesby sends a shiver down my aging (but I hope) liberal spine. Not that the Vietnamese War does not frighten me — as it frightens Humphrey and Schlesinger and must have frightened Kennedy and Stevenson.

But what of this "new" liberal who stands before us with his newly found charisma ready to ostracize all those who do not accept his neatly wrapped interpretation of the Vietnamese War? What of this new type who seemingly accepts *all* social revolution and *all* means as legitimate paths to a liberal society? What of this new breed of liberal who would explain "bad" liberals by association with "bad" corporations and in the same breath decry McCarthy? Indeed, the appearance of this liberal is quite frightening also.

May I suggest that in Mr. Oglesby and his friends we may have a new syndrome — one which calls itself "liberal" and yet sees the world in clearly demarcated "black" and "white" and one which explains the difficult and the complex by resorting to a conspiracy of bankrupt liberals.

May I also suggest that the cure for this syndrome come not from the right but from the left itself. For there are characteristics of liberalism which Mr. Oglesby conveniently neglects and this is its commitment to rational discourse and human freedom even when the reality it seeks to improve happens to

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THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY

The President's State of the Union Address, his Budget Message and his Economic Report to Congress are remarkable documents. One can place a finger on almost any paragraph and, like Jack Horner, pull out a plum. "The value of our Nation's annual output of goods and services rose more than one-third from 1960 to 1965." "In only seven other countries of the world is *total* output in a year as large as the *increase* in our output last year." "We are a rich nation and can afford to make progress at home while meeting obligations abroad."

All these things are true, and more. In 1965 America's economic growth was the most rapid of any industrial nation. Employment, wages and profits rose. At least by the President's standards, over two million people moved above the poverty line; unemployment is at its lowest in years. Inflation does threaten; but as the President wisely pointed out, "these are the problems we have been waiting to encounter for nearly 10 years. . . . These are the welcome problems of prosperity."

Such unprecedented strength ought to be the platform for unprecedented efforts at human betterment; and President Johnson has not failed to spin out a new list of projects: rebuilding central cities, cleaning up entire river basins, developing national transportation policies, extending unemployment insurance and minimum wage coverage, and devising new measures for the protection of consumers. All this, and Vietnam too. It seems like a dream.

Unfortunately, it is. Among the impressive figures of the Budget Message and the Economic Report are numerous indications that (1) the recent gains of the American economy have not been justly distributed; (2) the goals of the Great Society cannot be reached with the funds allocated for them; (3) the War on Poverty, despite all claims to the contrary, is being sacrificed to the War in Vietnam.

The President's own Economic Report shows clearly that the workingman has not received a just share of the nation's economic gains. In

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1965 the average earnings of workers in manufacturing and trades rose between 3 and 4 percent. Meanwhile, the average increase in corporative profits after taxes was 20 percent, and the increase in dividends paid was 12 percent. Despite the flurries of publicity resulting from Administration attempts to prevent various industries from *raising* prices, most corporations have not followed the proviso of the wage-price guidelines: that when profits are high, prices should actually be *cut*. The wage-price guidelines have played an important role in the present economic boom, and the President promises even tighter enforcement in 1966. But as long as the guidelines are not applied so as to prevent such a lopsided distribution of the nation's new wealth, labor can be relied upon to protest them.

Second, the expenditures for the war in Vietnam have clearly had their effect in restraining the government from thinking in the terms necessary to truly accomplish the goals which the President has enunciated. The National Planning Association, a group dominated by businessmen, estimates that it would take $2.1 trillion, spent over a period of 20 years, to accomplish the sort of urban reconstruction Mr. Johnson is talking about. This figure is not unreasonable, considering that it includes private as well as local government funds, and that America's yearly Gross National Product will be well into the trillions by 1985. But it suggests the kind of social investment the federal government will have to stimulate if the Great Society isn't to be mere rhetoric. The 1966 budget shows only the slightest sign of steps in this direction.

Third, and most important, the War on Poverty *is* falling victim to the war in Vietnam. The President says this isn't so, but the evidence is against him. There are the sins of commission: The program of school aid for impacted areas has been cut by one-fourth. The federal subsidy for milk for schoolchildren has been cut from $100 million to $21 million. Congress had authorized $660 million for new public works and the economic development program; now only half of that is being requested. The Manpower Administration is scheduled for a $27.6 million cut.

But the sins of omission are far more important. Many of the anti-poverty programs did not begin operating until well into the current fiscal year. Many of them were only in the planning stage, and still did not require large sums for the implementation of these plans. As a result, the much publicized increase in anti-poverty funds amounts to a drastic decrease when measured against expectations and plans. One report has it that the Office of Economic Opportunity had hoped for a $4 billion appropriation, had decided to only request $3 billion—and, of course, ended up with only $1.6 billion.

What is more, the President's Budget Message is only a request for Congressional authorization. Congress then need not actually *appropriate* all the money it authorizes; and it is rumored that this is precisely what will occur. Without firm Administration pressure, and even with it, the War on Poverty may be quietly sabotaged.

THE NEW BOMBINGS

In the absence of any positive response from Hanoi to the 37-day suspension of bombing in North Vietnam, the President's decision to resume the raids was probably a foregone conclusion. Conceivably, Mr. Johnson could have let the suspension continue for a longer period; he could even have decided on a permanent suspension. But the odds were against both courses, particularly since the Administration apparently never made any decision to slow down or halt the buildup of troops. And if the reports of a continued North Vietnamese infiltration of troops and supplies during the bombing lull can be credited with any truth, then it became a military necessity to resume the bombing: to protect the American troops against an increasingly augmented enemy, and to insure that any earlier military gains would not be totally nullified by fresh North Vietnamese reinforcements and matériel.

From the military point of view — given a continuance of the ground war—the decision was, then, inexorable. But therein, of course, lies one of the major flaws of the whole Johnson "peace offensive." Diplomatically, the United States gave every evidence of seeking negotiations; but militarily, it acted as if it planned sooner or later to escalate the war. Why else, the North Vietnamese might well ask, would the United States continue to add new troops to an already large force? To understand the force of such a question for any national leader one need only recognize that President Johnson himself reasoned in a similar fashion. He judged North Vietnamese intentions not only by its diplomatic silence but, just as much, by the eloquent military fact of continuing infiltration.

That said, it must be added that President Johnson, by suspending raids in the north, gave one concrete expression to his proclaimed desire for honorable negotiations. That was and remains one more expression than has been forthcoming from Hanoi. Had Mr. Johnson waited longer before resuming the raids, such

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an expression might have come. But that must remain a matter of disembodied speculation, based more on pious hopes than anything else.

President Johnson has asserted that the resumption of bombing "does not mean the end of our own pursuit of peace." Well and good, we say—noting, however, that he could hardly say anything else. But it ought to be clear by now that a more dramatic sign is needed than the cessation of northern bombing raids. One such sign would be to announce a willingness to negotiate directly with the Vietcong. The American stubbornness on this point is every bit as hidebound as Hanoi's demand that we accept the Vietcong as "the sole genuine representative of the people of South Vietnam." Beyond that we ask only that the new bombings—which are deplorable—be kept to a minimum, that the Administration be prepared to halt them at a moment's notice, and that American militarists be kept under firm rein. Escalation has become a fact; the President must re-double efforts for negotiation.

THE MISSING BOMB

Do we dare contemplate the full implications of the hydrogen bomb "missing" off the coast of Spain? The situation is rather more than embarrassing; it could well have repercussions for U.S. military base rights in other countries. Officials are thus anxious to see the case quickly closed, but this is nonetheless an ominous sign. Is there something to cover up?

The bomb is reported to be lying two miles off the coast under 800 feet of water. What is it doing there? Nobody seems to be quite sure, except that a B-52 collided with its fuel tanker over the spot. Does this mean the planes are also down in the water, or was the bomb fumbled, as in football, during the collision?

Nobody's talking, but the case has all the earmarks of Spectre's dirty work. There are striking parallels between this latest cold-war episode and "Thunderball," the newest Bond film in which a nuclear device is highjacked at sea. A ship carrying the device is sunk and the cargo is extracted by a fleet of Spectre scuba divers. The question raised, of course, is who is anticipating whom. A couple of years ago a famous gem theft was modeled after events in a movie called "Topkapi." Fortunately, "Gone With the Wind" came after the fact, otherwise who knows how it would have ended.

We see how important it is, then, that movies have happy, moral, and if possible good-natured, endings. Artistic liberty is fine as long as art mirrors life. But now, when life seems to be mirroring art, license cannot be far behind. "Thunderball," luckily, works out in the end. Right now, we imagine, in a corridor in Washington a man, tall, spare of frame, stylishly dressed, reflects soberly on the hysteria of the times. He is a symptom, while he thinks he is a savior.

TRADITIONALIST TROUBLE

Father DePauw's troubles hinge, at the moment, on the narrow issue of canonical jurisdiction. If, as he claims, the process of excardination from the Archdiocese of Baltimore and incardination into the Italian Diocese of Tivoli was complete and legal, then he cannot be condemned as a disobedient priest for ignoring the wishes of Baltimore's Cardinal Shehan. Father DePauw and Bishop Kurz, a bishop-in-exile from a mission diocese in China, claim that Bishop Faveri of Tivoli admitted the transfer was complete. Father DePauw further claims to have in his possession a "to-whom-it-may-concern-letter" from Bishop Faveri to this effect.

According to the Baltimore chancery, no matter what Bishop Faveri thought of the situation two months ago, the matter was not complete at that time, and Cardinal Shehan remains as Father DePauw's legitimate superior. And since Bishop Faveri, the Vatican Secretary of State and the Apostolic Delegate to the U. S. now agree with this interpretation, Father DePauw appears fated to return to Baltimore.

Still, there are many puzzling aspects to this case, and they must be cleared up. If Cardinal Shehan was willing to let Father DePauw leave his archdiocese last spring, and was still willing as late as November, why did he reverse himself in the past few weeks? (One obvious reason would be that he had no idea Father DePauw, as a priest of an Italian diocese, would be returned to the United States to agitate for his movement with no responsibility to any American bishop. If this is the case, Cardinal Shehan might simply say so. He has never really articulated his objections to Father DePauw, and since the priest has raised crucial issues of clerical freedom, the Cardinal might well address himself to issues other than canonical jurisdiction.)

Obviously the question of jurisdiction must be settled, but the community at large is more interested in whether Father DePauw is being penalized for rocking the boat. If he is, the authorities ought to be candid and explain specifically what the offenses were and why Father DePauw had to be stopped. As in the Berrigan case, if a controversial priest is penalized, the community will want to know why.

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ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

THE COUNCIL, SI

Both Dom Aelred Graham, in *Encounter,* and Arnold Lunn, in the *National Review,* have written with less than enthusiasm about the Vatican Council. For my part, I hated to see the Council end, and not just because it supplied the excuse for a couple of pleasant trips to Rome.

We need more, not less, dialogue inside the Church, and the Council was the greatest promoter of dialogue we have seen yet. For too many years, views unpopular with someone or other in authority had no real outlet in the everyday life of the Church. Even such a staunchly orthodox priest as Father John Courtney Murray came under a Roman cloud. What a blessed relief it was, then, to find his views and those of similar "radicals" publicly expressed in the Council proceedings—indeed, not only publicly expressed but very often commanding a large majority of the votes by the Council Fathers. There are undoubtedly conservatives who are still entrenched in high places, but after the Council voting pattern of the last three years there is no longer any reason for liberals to feel they are an insignificant minority. Individual dioceses may be reactionary, and to my sorrow I can list a good many which are, but these areas are bucking the trend; they do not, I am convinced, represent the shape of the future.

A good many people fall short in their appreciation of the Council, I think. Just take the question of tone. Previous Councils were, almost by necessity, negative in tone. They were called to repel attack, to anathematize, to denounce one heretic or another. In contrast, this Council was positive in tone from beginning to end. It fought shy of condemnations—not only condemnations of the old enemy, Communism, but of a whole variety of possible targets, from atheism to secular humanism. For this refreshingly positive approach we can all be grateful.

The Council produced sixteen solemnly promulgated documents—constitutions, decrees and declarations. Some people are inclined to dismiss this output lightly, but I think they make two mistakes. First of all, they underestimate the documents themselves. Something like the Constitution on the Church, for example, is a lengthy and profound theological statement on the nature of the Church. It is not something that could be done in a day or two. Secondly, I think these critics underestimate the sheer size and complexity of the Council itself. Imagine a parliament of some twenty-three hundred men of every race and color and nationality from all over the globe. Picture the complexity of trying to give speaking time for everyone who desired it and still to produce documents that could command overwhelming majorities and, in most cases, the praise of the world. This is what the Council did, and even in four sessions this in itself was no small accomplishment.

For years to come theologians will be finding new insights in Conciliar documents. Again consider, for instance, the Constitution on the Church. Whole books can be and have already been written on it. Nonetheless, it is already obvious that assimilation of its message will mean a revolution in our thinking. This one Conciliar document puts an end to formalism and legalism in considering the nature of the Church. It abandons the dry old bones of the past once and for all.

Or consider the Constitution on the Liturgy. I know that in many places there is considerable awkwardness about the changes and that some dioceses have carried them out very badly indeed. But time and patient effort will solve these problems, and they should not obscure the importance of what has been done. In the face of much opposition and inertia, the Constitution on the Liturgy reaffirmed the need and the right for greater participation in the worship of the Church, including provision for the use of vernacular language. Furthermore, it reaffirmed the role of the Word of God in our worship, emphasizing the importance of the Scriptures and creating a link to Protestant Christians. All by itself this document represents a mighty gust of that fresh air Pope John called for when he conceived the Council in the first place.

Yes, people say, but aside from Schema 13, the Church in the Modern World, everything is "too churchy." And if the effects of Conciliar documents were confined to the sacristy, I would agree. But I am convinced that this is not the case. The decree on ecumenism, the declaration on the Jews, the declaration on religious liberty, the statement of attitudes toward other religions, the words on peace in Schema 13, the changes in seminary life, the reform of religious orders—all these things, I am convinced, will bear good fruit in the world around us. The task that now confronts us is to apply the results of the Ecumenical Council in every parish and in every diocese. In some cases this will take real doing.

JAMES O'GARA

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THE NEW ECONOMICS

Where it is taking us

EDWARD T. CHASE

Public preoccupation with Vietnam, so eminently justified, is nonetheless diverting attention from what is in the long run a much more momentous development – the emergence of a new order of national economic planning for sustained property that is proving to be extremely successful. The American economy is now in its 59th month of uninterrupted expansion, breaking all records and refuting the belief that cyclical recessions are inherent in our system.

The headlines on economic matters – the possible need for tax increases because of Vietnam, apprehension about our balance of payments, conflict between the Federal Reserve and Administration over interest rates and so on – are details. They should not obscure an overriding fact: the United States is providing evidence that it is capable of preventing depressions and within reach of ensuring over-all economic health. The implications here for social justice at home and also for the world's well being are striking. Not that the millenium is at hand; grave deficiencies in economic theory and practice urgently need illumination, too, as I shall show.

The breakthrough to a new era in American economic planning signaled two things. The first was the total acceptance of Keynesianism. The second was the findings of our best post-Keynesian academic economists. The latter led to the final rejection of the pre-World War II conventional wisdom of business, favoring balanced budgets, high interest rates and a close rein on both government initiatives and trade union ambitions. As the main architect of the new economics, Walter Heller, Chief of the Council of Economic Advisers under both President Kennedy and Johnson, put it recently, the 1964 tax cut marked a watershed, the revolutionary step taking us across "the Great Divide" between a past of restrictive policies keyed to wrong-headed notions of budget balancing and a present of non-inflationary yet steadily stimulative measures.

What must be appreciated here is the very precise rationale behind the 1964 cut. The next tax cut figure of ten and one half billion dollars was arrived at by calculating, on the basis of long-observed stable relationships between income and consumption and investment, what figure would close the production gap. This gap is the difference between the *actual* level of the Gross Product and its *potential* level at "full" employment (4% unemployment), including "full" use of productive facilities (92%). The multiplier and accelerator effects from a tax cut can be very accurately measured.

In consequence of this analysis, the tax cuts have been achieving results as planned. Precise estimates show that the tax cut will produce a $36 billion increase in the G.N.P.: $26 billion resulting from the personal income tax reduction, $10 billion from the corporation tax cut. Furthermore the result of the cut has been sustained growth *plus* a balanced budget, confounding conservative doomsdayers.

The lesson is that judicious tax cuts increase Federal tax receipts, end deficits, and balance budgets because

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they nourish *controlled* economic expansion. This is a new kind of positive fiscal policy, different in intent from the passive policy of avoiding depressions which we've depended upon since the thirties and which has been based on automatic stabilizers like social security (essential though these have been). The new expansion has resulted in all-time highs for both corporate profits after taxes and for wages and, at last, an unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, concurrent with over-all price stability and growing strength of the dollar. The fact is, of course, that unless the G.N.P. grows faster than the growth of the labor force and our new plant, we just stand still or lose ground, and to do this now means we require an annual advance in over-all economic growth of between $35 billion and $40 billion.

Fiscal Drag

The new economics starts with the acceptance of "deficit financing" and the tax cut. It continues with the concept of "fiscal drag" which is the crux of the so-called Heller Plan and its variants. The notion of "fiscal drag" can be most effectively understood when one contemplates the fact that there is now *automatic* growth in federal revenues of about $7 billion a year at existing tax rates (even after the income and excise tax cuts) and at existing growth rates. Now these accumulated revenues, if allowed to build up, can have a devitalizing, dragging effect upon the economy. By 1970, if tax rates remained unchanged, we'd have $35 billion more in federal revenues than we are collecting today.

Thus the question arises as to what to do with the accumulation and the answers can be either to cut taxes proportionately to preclude the "drag," or spend the money. The Heller Plan, as originally formulated, proposes that this "extra" federal tax revenue be routed back to the states and to local government for expenditure on vital unmet public needs such as education, urban reconstruction, pollution control, etc. It is notorious that the state and local governments are underfinanced. It is thus irrational to cut federal income taxes and at the same time boost property, sales and excise taxes. The tantalizing paradox here is that, as Heller puts it, if we *don't* "declare the fiscal dividend" – that is, utilize it constructively through expenditure on social needs – the dividend won't continue to develop. For by the nature of fiscal drag, the whole economic process will slow down and could touch off a recession. Heller himself does not insist that "the fiscal dividend," this $35 billion we're due to receive by 1970, be returned to the states. Alternatives are to increase federal expenditures on unmet needs, or simply to cut taxes further, or perhaps to augment our entire social security program (without having to boost our already onerous payroll tax). No nation in history has heretofore been able to contemplate such prospects. (I should point out that the 1966 "dividend" has been preempted by increased expenditures for Vietnam.)

The new economics established by Heller and his associates during the past half dozen years has not, as commonly thought, been confined simply to over-all economic growth. True, priority was given to revitalizing the economy after the torpor of the Eisenhower era. Yet it was also recognized that ever more rapid technological change was creating an intractable structural unemployment that could not be entirely overcome by an increase in aggregate demand. This would require manpower retraining and direct attack on regional poverty pockets – hence, the Manpower Development and Training legislation, the Area Redevelopment Act, the extraordinary educational statutes, civil rights legislation, the expansion of social security (notably via Medicare) and the anti-poverty legislation. To be sure these measures *in toto* will not prove 100 percent or 75 percent successful. The point is that the new economics has encompassed a consciously planned, comprehensive strategy such as we have never had before, not even at the height of the New Deal. Among the reasons for this is that only in recent times has economics had access to full and reliable statistics from which plans could be developed. This is evidenced in the recent brilliant report, from the President's Special Commission, "Technology and the American Economy."

The Private Sector

A very basic issue raised by the tax cut was the fact that this meant the money was left to be spent at the discretion of the individual citizen, in the private sector. This meant, in short, an allocation of resources by the decentralized decisions of the consumers. In contrast, the same ultimate stimulative effect might have been achieved by allocation of the funds on public programs by centralized decisions of the federal government – some critics of the tax cut policy urged just this. A strong case can be made for this, more directed, action in the public sector on grounds of rational response to the common interest.

In opting for the public's decentralized private decision-making the Administration, whether consciously or not, to this extent paid its respect to the traditional American reliance upon the efficacy of the market system with its famed invisible hand. Today the market system functions under all manner of restraint and mod-

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ifications, to be sure, some arising from governmental regulation, some arising from corporate monopoly. But in the "new" economics, as always before under our enterprise system, the market remains the engine of the economy and the chief allocator of resources. The achievements I have been describing simply reflect the very considerable degree to which the shots now can be called within an essentially free competitive market system.

How efficient and equitable is this U.S. system, the creator of the richest society the world has known, compared with its greatest rival system, Soviet Russian socialism? One of the West's leading scholars on Soviet economics, Abram Bergson, Director of The Russian Research Center at Harvard, has recently confronted anew this persistently asked question. In his new book, *The Economics of Soviet Planning,* Bergson shows that by nearly all criteria the performance of the United States economy is superior. For one thing, the ruble price system is a cause of considerable economic waste in the U.S.S.R. since it fails to provide reliable information on prevailing scarcities, the prime function of a good price system. Work-incentive arrangements are also defective and this has the result of inhibiting exertion, inhibiting the acquisition of skills and the assumption of responsibility.

The U.S.S.R.'s bad record in agriculture is notorious. In the areas of importance where statistical evidence is at hand, notably in a comparison of productivity in Russia and in the U.S.A., Bergson reports that, per unit of labor and reproducible capital, the net national product of the U.S.S.R. has been only 54.9 per cent of that in the U.S.A. Bergson conjectures that perhaps the key factor is the difference in quality between the typical Soviet and typical American worker. Forty-nine percent of employed workers in the U.S.S.R. in 1960 were women, compared with 33 per cent in the U.S.A. and the Soviet worker typically has had less schooling. With respect to the allegedly faster Soviet growth rate, Bergson writes, yes, it has been somewhat faster than the U.S.A.'s but it has dropped markedly in the past few years and was explained initially by the Soviet's high rate of investment, "the extraordinary opportunities to borrow Western technology" and the Soviet opportunity to raise labor quality rapidly from an initially low level.

As for the much over-publicized effort to introduce greater decentralization into Soviet economic decision-making in the interest of the consumer and to borrow some of the trappings of our market system, Bergson, like most other experts on Soviet economics, dismisses the development as superficial. Of far greater import, in the long run, is the prospect of adoption of the theories of a brilliant Russian mathematician-economist, L.V. Kantorovich. He has developed the formulas for using computers to plan an entire national economy. His scheme in effect simulates a price-market system and, theoretically, would, in its relentless rationality, improve upon it. The notion greatly excites the profession. Doubtless it will be many years before we shall see a test of its practicality.

The Profit Motive

Meanwhile the U.S.A. can hardly afford to be complacent about its newly perfected techniques for sustaining aggregate growth and overcoming structural poverty. The anti-poverty effort for one thing has dramatized the fact that our recent economic triumphs have yet to rescue millions of Americans from devastatingly inadequate annual incomes. Even supposing, as is probable, that sustained over-all growth and greatly expanded anti-poverty, rehabilitative and educational programs indeed erase poverty in the abject material sense, nonetheless the market system has inherent defects that must be confronted. Most fundamental and in a way most subtle, since unmeasured, is the fact that the market system is dominated by large corporations that monopolize the energies of the nation's most talented men strictly for corporate profitmaking. For these executives no other interest is allowed precedence, an incalculable loss for the general public. The material results are distorting for our culture because in instance after instance this means that the nature of goods and services is dictated by the capacity of such goods or services to achieve, on the average, the greatest mass acceptance. The effects include the degradation of the popular arts, especially advertising-supported television and radio; a malign bias to luxury housing in an era of desperate urban squalor; the corporate and individual exploitation of land, water and air resulting in environmental pollution; the near demise of public transportation in favor of private—incidentally, *a major* cause of unemployment in the Watts area of Los Angeles, where the bus rides to work areas average 1½ hours *each way.*

In a word, a great society can't leave everything up to the profit motive. Or you can, but to save the environment and protect the public interest, it becomes necessary to see to it that "serving the public interest" is made, by law, a necessary item in the cost of doing business. To accomplish this will be the most tremendous challenge to face the next generation of political economists. Only when this challenge is met will the U.S.A. have a market economy in which we can take pride for more than simply breaking quantitative records.

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De Gaulle muddles through

SUSPENSE IN FRANCE

STANLEY HOFFMANN

The campaign for the presidential elections of December 1965 started in boredom and confusion, continued in excitement and surprise, and ended with a familiar face as well as with a forest of question marks. The elections have thrown a strong light on the weaknesses of de Gaulle's regime, but left remedies and alternatives in almost total darkness.

The elections are interesting in three respects: the results, the institutions, the issues.

The results tell us a great deal about both the electoral strength and the evolution of Gaullism. De Gaulle's first ballot strength (43 percent of the votes cast) corresponded to the strength of the Gaullist candidates in the 1962 legislative elections (36 percent), plus a sizable fraction of the left-wing electorate—men and women who may not vote for Gaullist deputies but who trust de Gaulle personally. The Gaullists themselves draw their strength largely from voters on the center and right who before 1958 had supported the Christian-Democratic MRP and the independents.

What deprived the General of his victory on the first ballot was the almost four million voters who had, in the legislative elections of 1958 and 1962, continued to support MRP and non-Gaullist independent candidates, but had always voted for de Gaulle personally in referendums; these voters now decided to vote for Jean Lecanuet, the President of the MRP, supported by the independents. On the second ballot, the Lecanuet electorate split: about half returned to de Gaulle, and thus to the tradition that makes them choose him whenever the question is one of saying only yes or no to him. The other half either went to Mitterrand or dropped blank ballots into the boxes.

As a result, on the second ballot, where de Gaulle got 55 percent of the vote, his net loss by comparison with the 1962 referendum was about 7 percent of the total votes cast: a loss, interestingly enough, neither on his left nor on his right, but on his center. The Lecanuet voters who did not return to de Gaulle's fold on December 19 appear to have been primarily urban and MRP voters, not rural and independent ones. Thus in the final analysis most of the previously pro-de Gaulle peasants, though worried by the Common Market crisis, nevertheless preferred de Gaulle to a candidate backed by the Communists; the real desertion was in the urban middle classes.

The map of December 19 is fascinating: it shows a great deal of resemblance to the map of France during the German occupation. In what was Vichy France François Mitterrand got close to or more than 50 percent of the votes; in what used to be occupied France de Gaulle prevailed most easily. This is not an economic division. De Gaulle's area of strength encompasses the industrial East and North as well as impoverished rural provinces in the West; Mitterrand's area includes the very dynamic Marseille region as well as poorer rural zones. It is primarily a difference in political styles: Mitterrand's area favors the style of the parliamentary republics, with its ideological language, sharp passions, attachment to the representative system and distrust of the state. Here the resistance movements during the war were most "politicized"; here the pre-war parties, while nominally suppressed, managed to live on. De Gaulle's area is the one in which the resistance was more national than ideological, more military than political, in which after the war disgust with the inefficiency of fractured parliamentarism and longing for a strong executive was greatest (as manifested by support for de Gaulle's RPF in the late 1940's, and for Mendès-France in 1954). Thus, as usual in France, historical differences fail to fade away. The fact that the violently anti-Gaullist French settlers from Algeria, who voted for Tixier-Vignancour on the first ballot and for Mitterrand on the second now live in Southern France has helped to keep the difference alive.

The Presidency

The elections were supposed to test the present state of the institutions of the Fifth Republic, and first of all the nature and powers of the Presidency. Two theories had been presented. De Gaulle's conception

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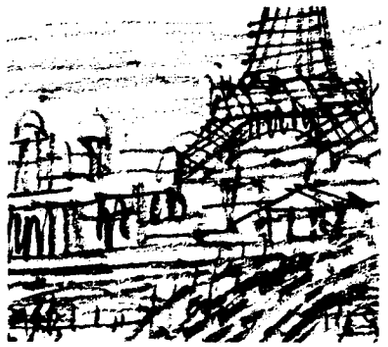
was simple and fierce: since party divisions are irreparably resilient, the only hope for effective government lies in the election by the people of a "man of the nation" who is "above the parties" and keeps maximum distance from them (hence the fact that the presidential and legislative elections take place at very different times). De Gaulle obviously hoped that if the French voted, in the presidential elections, differently from the way in which they vote for Parliament, a President endorsed by the people would still have sufficient prestige as well as powers to rule. Thus he did not envisage so much an end to the traditional oscillation from saviors to splintering, as an institutionalization of the savior.



Gaston Defferre also wanted a strong President (and was thus accused of seeking Gaullism without de Gaulle) but one with a clear majority in Parliament. Conflicts between Parliament and President would, he believed, despite all the constitutional gimmicks, expose the French either to dictatorship or to a return to Parliament's impotent predominance. The prerequisite was obviously party reform, replacing the fragmented parties of the French scene with a small number of big units, each one presenting its candidate, each one capable of winning a majority. The historic oscillation would thus disappear along with the splintering.

In November, however, the voters, on the first ballot, behaved almost exactly as if it had been a legislative election. Here lies the supreme irony and drama: all of de Gaulle's rivals have come to accept the idea of a strong, popularly elected President, at the very same time as de Gaulle came to understand that mechanical engineering is no substitute for the organic conditions which alone would keep the Presidency strong. De Gaulle now proclaims with something close to desperation that Constitutions are no more than envelopes and that the resilience of French parties made him still a "national necessity." But his own dislike of all parties has bolstered their resilience. He cannot make his "national necessity" immortal, nor, perhaps, could this "necessity" govern effectively if the legislative elections of 1967, returned, for the first time, a hostile majority. Then would come the fateful choice between autocracy and resignation—and at his age, the choice would obviously be the latter. The victim would be not only de Gaulle but the strong Presidency itself. For it is a fact (and prima facie evidence in favor of Defferre's conception) that the effectiveness of de Gaulle's long rule is due at least in part to his majority in the two parliaments with which he had governed.

Hence the importance of those coming elections; hence the importance of the second aspect of the institutional problem: the state of the parties. Some observers had hoped that the new "rules of the game"—the presidential election by universal suffrage—would oblige the parties to "realign" themselves. Others, like Raymond Aron, pointed to the case of various Latin American countries in which a popularly elected President coexists, more or less unhappily, with an incorrigibly splintered Congress.

The trouble is that while everybody talks of realignment there are two conflicting designs—and the vote was too inconclusive to determine which of the two is the more sensible. Defferre's idea anticipated three forces: the Communists; a center federation including the Socialists, Radicals and Christian Democrats; and a Conservative grouping consisting of the Gaullists and the Independents. The conception had merits, but it also had troubles: first, that the Independents are too anti-Gaullist to let themselves be pushed into a camp which would have been dominated by the Gaullists; and secondly, and much more fatally, that Defferre's own party refuses to tie itself to the Christian Democrats and to cut itself off from the Communists.

The other conception of "regrouping," shared by Mollet, the sturdy and wily Socialist boss, and Lecanuet, advocates, on the left, a loose alliance of the Communists with the emerging "small federation" of Socialists and Radicals; in the middle, a party or federation of the MRP and Independents that might, after de Gaulle, open its doors to some of the Gaullists; and on the right, the bulk of the Gaullists. This is the kind of alignment that existed on the first ballot. But it was plagued by the heterogeneity of the left-wing grouping and the brittleness of Lecanuet's support.

As soon as the vote was over, the battle between Mollet and Defferre resumed in the Socialist Party. The Defferrists argue that if their man had had his way in June, the Communists would have been forced to support his non-Communist federation, due to sheer phobia of presenting a candidate of their own and thus exposing their true strength, or lack thereof. But for the time being, Mollet and Lecanuet are riding high on

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their respective limping horses. For while their conception is the least promising in the long run for French party reform, it is probably the most capable of producing an anti-Gaullist majority in the legislative elections of 1967.

Was the Electorate "Repoliticized"?

The last aspect of the institutional problem concerns the electorate itself. Did the campaign amount to genuine "repolitization" or not? Nobody knows. The percentage of abstentions was the lowest ever; the fervor with which the TV debates were followed proved that the national passion for politics is still alive. On the other hand, it was the passion of spectators at a wrestling game rather than that of participants: both the parliamentarism denounced by de Gaulle and the Gaullist "monarchy" have turned the citizens into a huge collection of observers and kibitzers. The very fact that one third of the voters who, according to the polls, had planned to vote for de Gaulle changed their minds in the last two weeks before the first ballot shows that the sudden opening of the state-controlled radio and TV network to debate had a much more unsettling effect than debates in a country in which the citizens, who feel less "left out," are also less suggestible and more responsible.

If we turn to the issues themselves (besides the future of the institutions), we come to the same conclusion: there was more heat than light.

Domestically, the issue most openly discussed was the regime's conservative economic policy and inadequate social programs. This cost de Gaulle many votes, especially on the first ballot. However, the most telling domestic issues against him were probably the half-expressed ones of age versus youth and crisis government versus normalcy. To many Frenchmen, especially the young voters whose political consciousness developed after de Gaulle's historic services to the nation in World War II and in the Algerian emergency, de Gaulle's tense and haughty style of government, his scale of priorities, his way of using the sweep of French and world history rather than the present problems of France as his touchstone, simply lose their justification in normal times. He won, nevertheless, partly because he shrewdly reminded many of his listeners that the times are normal again thanks to him, partly because the spokesmen for normalcy, while personally respectable or attractive, had left themselves open to his charge that they would, whatever their intentions, bring back the old parties, hence crisis and disorder. At present, domestically, the voters seem almost evenly poised between a desire for more relaxed politics, and a fear of the tensions that relaxation used to bring.

Finally on foreign policy, it takes the wilful blindness of some American commentators to interpret the vote as a repudiation of de Gaulle. It was neither a rejection nor an explicit approval. To be sure, Europe was an issue and cost de Gaulle votes on both ballots (for the Lecanuet vote that went to Mitterrand on December 19 may have done so largely on that issue). However, a close look at platforms and votes reveals that, on the first ballot, only a fifth of the electorate embraced what one would call orthodox Atlanticism—the endorsement of NATO, of American foreign policy even in Vietnam, and of united Europe in the Atlantic framework. (One fraction of that fifth is made up of former Vichyites, Fascists and Algerian ultras.) On the second ballot, de Gaulle regained two fifths of those votes.

Moreover, the united Europe of Lecanuet had less in common with that of Mitterrand than both men (united in their desire to dislodge de Gaulle) would have one believe. Whereas Lecanuet's was orthodox Monnet, Mitterrand's federalist utopia was based quite explicitly on the perfectly shaky assumption that a Federal Europe would endorse Mitterrand's over-all foreign policy—one which was, in all respects but two, very close to de Gaulle's. His plea for a détente, his critique of the United States in Vietnam, his appeal to the "third world," his call for a reform of NATO, his opposition to nuclear weapons for Germany, were "Gaullism without de Gaulle."

His two areas of disagreement, important at first sight, turn out, on analysis, to be insignificant. One was precisely his endorsement of a European Federation, which de Gaulle rejects because he knows what Mitterrand chooses to ignore: the resistance of other Europeans to the notion of a "European Europe" (which Mitterrand nevertheless gave as both the goal and condition of his Federation). The other was the military area: Mitterrand, much like the British Labor Party in its opposition days, announced that he would put an end to the French military nuclear program. But he somehow tied this move to effective world disarmament and arbitration, an old daydream of the left.

If anything, the French election has given to de Gaulle's foreign policy a kind of de facto recognition. Now, as before, the greatest threat to it lies not in a direct challenge of the vision behind it, but in the continuing doubt about the regime's capacity to wage foreign policy successfully, should it return, after 1967 or after de Gaulle, to the sad tradition of ineffectual splintering and executive impotence, which de Gaulle has definitely not yet exorcized.

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Getting the measure

LANGUAGE, MYTH AND MR. UPDIKE

ANTHONY BURGESS

We in Europe still, when it comes to comparing the distinctive contributions of America and our own continent (with its offshore islands) to Western culture, tend to think in terms of the old Henry James dichotomy—that America is all energy and Europe is all style, and that any marriage between the two is impossible. Now the fact is that some of the most remarkable contributions to prose style of recent years have been made by Americans, and these not always émigrés like Nabokov.

Nabokov, indeed, has been turned by America into the sort of European that Europe no longer produces—autocratic, defiantly intellectual, seemingly avant-garde but actually closing in to a little lost world of brilliant pedantry. Pedantry is often the real adopted country of the intellectual exile (think of *Pale Fire, Finnegans Wake* and *Doctor Faustus*). Pedantry is also frequently the clown's outfit endued by the homegrown misfit: it is seen in the mockery of Art Buchwald and the self-mockery of Peter de Vries. The homegrown writer who is not a misfit tends, so we think in Europe, to the prose-thickets that call for editorial pruning, or to the typewriterese which looks avant-garde when it is merely illiterate: the impression is of clumsy muscularity, not careful art.

Young Mr. John Updike is an exception. The "young" is not meant to be patronizing: the youthfulness of his exuberance is matched by a youthful, even sophomoric, devotion to style; one is aware, too, that, despite a considerable corpus of achievement already known and admired on both sides of the Atlantic, he is only now approaching a maturity of aim and craft. He is a young American writer, and Europe likes its American writers to be young. We are a two-faced lot over here in these cold lands of corruption: youth can excuse the sprawling vital ill-composed epic, but it can also excuse qualities which Europeans still think they monopolize—fastidiousness, Flaubertian martyrdom, an innocent belief in the power of exact language.

Updike became very well-known in England for his novel *Rabbit, Run*. The title probably has false connotations for us: there was a popular song in 1939 called "Run, rabbit, run," later—when war broke out—parodied to "Run, Adolf, run." God knows what English people thought they were buying when they picked up this novel from railway bookstalls. They could hardly have been prepared for the meticulous notations of male weakness that make up the book. When I read and reviewed it I made a judgment that I have since had no cause to revise—that Updike was guilty of a sort of democratic heresy in pouring the riches of language on characters and situations so trivial.

The exactness of the writing was at the opposite pole to the exactness of the writing of Hemingway: where Hemingway strips language of its literary connotations, Updike makes us aware of the whole history of language—not so much in vocabulary, perhaps, as in rhythm and sentence-organization. Now the use of a whole complex palimpsest of literary associations, brought to the delineation of drab lives and weak wills, can be ironic: it can imply social criticism. There didn't seem to be any social criticism, any real irony, in *Rabbit, Run*; there seemed rather to be a very piquant parallelism of content and style. This made one want to read his next novel, in the hope that a fusion of these two elements might have taken place, the richness of the fictional material matching the richness of the writing. We expected, many of us, a book with a mythical framework, and this is precisely what we got.

The Link

The Centaur was a noble attempt at adding fresh dimensions to a contemporary story by calling on ancient myth. James Joyce, when writing *Ulysses*, saw that the use of a Homeric parallel to thicken, ennoble and (in art's paradox) to light up with irony the details of ordinary Dublin lives, would not only justify great length but would also be the best pretext for throwing at the reader great hunks of learning and linguistic experiment. Joyce was dogged in planting his Odyssean allusions in low-life street-scenes; sometimes the pedantry was humorous and mocking, sometimes (as in the

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lying-in hospital chapter, where a procession of prose-styles from *Beowulf* to Carlyle symbolizes the growth of the embryo in the womb) it was self-defeating.

In *The Centaur,* Updike's own pedantry leads him to an explicit list of parallels and (his modern centaur defecates in the corridor) to a confusion of actuality and symbol. But the brilliance of the language seemed no longer to be functioning in a void, unrelated to the subject-matter of the book: it was appropriate to the complexity of the over-all image; it was the true link between the story and the myth.

His latest novel, *Of the Farm* (Knopf, $3.95), is very brief and unpretentious, but it is still a book by a deliberate stylist, and the style sometimes subsists on its own, unrelated to the simple events it is intended to serve. The story seems to a European reader to be very American. Joey Robinson is a New York advertising consultant who brings his new wife and his stepson to the family farm in southeastern Pennsylvania. His mother lives there alone, and the farm itself is no longer under cultivation.

On the first level we meet the nostalgia of an over-urbanized American for his country roots, and the sense that a highly industrialized monster feeding on stereotypes must, sooner rather than later, open its claws to crush this rural pocket of tranquillity and sane values. On the second level there is the interaction of past and present time—memories of Joey's first wife (strongly reinforced by Joey's mother) battling with the actuality of his second, the sense of the break-up of families, the need to adjust to new loyalties and yet somehow remain faithful to the old. There is nothing so gross as a plot-structure, only the interplay of living voices with each other and with the voices of ghosts.

Anthropomorphic Spells

I am concerned here with the how rather than the what, and I take at random a typical brief paragraph:

> To close the window I left the bed. The small thump of the sash seemed to trigger the night; lightning flashed behind Schoelkopf's hill and thunder, like a violent guest grown too much at home, clapped. I got back into bed facing Peggy. Her warmth altered my flesh. She put her oval hand upon me.

Here we see faults inseparable from certain virtues. The need to relate the impersonal world of nature to the personal world in the bedroom produces a purely fanciful kind of anthropomorphism, whose possible effect of sentimentality the author attempts to mitigate with the language of mass-communication—"trigger the night," indeed. Nor is it easy to reconcile the two elements contained in "clapped." A thunderclap is violent; a guest claps his host's imitation of Sinatra, but the violence of the action is no indication that he himself is violent, nor that he has "grown too much at home." By the time we have tried to sort out the incompatibles the power of the description is much diminished. After the attempt at sharp particularities comes the apology of the vague "Her warmth altered my flesh." Finally, Peggy's hand may be oval, but its shape is not relevant to the situation, and the small surprise we may feel at the revelation of its shape may drag us away from that situation.

Updike's willingness to let language draw our attention from his narrative is, nevertheless, a healthy sign that language means something to him. Now look at this:

> It had been June, hot. The windows were old-fashionedly flung open and the sounds of the East River lifted into the room. The judicial sanctum was capacious along obsolete lines of office space, and the furniture, which included a wooden bench where my mother sat, looked sparse and stray, as if these inanimate survivors of a vanished courthouse era had been humanly subjected to the bewildered thinning of mortality.

Here is the ghost of Henry James, invoked with the generalizing language. Once admit "judicial sanctum" and you are bound to be led along familiar paths of imprecision to a kind of post-Dickensian anthropomorphism of domestic objects. My failure to see why the throwing open of windows should be old-fashioned may have something to do with not living in an air-conditioned country.

I quote these two examples to show Updike's awareness of linguistic effects, but also to show how the effects tend to get out of hand. Sometimes, however, the self-consciousness triumphs:

> My wife is wide, wide-hipped and long-waisted, and, surveyed from above, gives an impression of terrain, of a wealth whose ownership imposes upon my own body a sweet strain of extension; entered, she

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yields a variety of landscapes, seeming now a snowy rolling perspective of bursting cotton bolls seen through the Negro arabesques of a fancywork wrought-iron balcony; now a taut vista of mesas dreaming in the midst of sere and painterly ochre; now a gray French castle completely fitted to a steep green hill whose terraces imitate turrets; now something like Antarctica; and then a receding valleyland of blacks and purples where an unrippled river flows unseen between shadowy banks of grapes that are never eaten.

There is more of this, evoking the sexual landscape in the penultimate chapter of *Finnegans Wake,* but totally wideawake, a cunning rococo cadenza or perhaps something earlier and baroque—the fantasy-making extravagance of the metaphysical poets. Sometimes the preciosity is unbearable—"sere and painterly ochre," for example—but on the whole the thing works. It is the sort of thing that brings poetry back to the novel—not the poetry of action or casual close description but the poetry of digression, the only kind really admissible.

Touches like this give *Of the Farm* an intensity, as well as a relaxed quality of genuine "pastoral," very rare in contemporary letters. It does not dare as much as *The Centaur* but, in the sense that it knows almost perfectly how to encompass a foreknown and limited success, it is far more mature. What we expect from John Updike now is a book which essays margins of the consciousness which will justify linguistic extravagance and a further exploitation of myth. He is one of America's most exciting talents, but much of the excitement is still to come.

007, 8, 9, ETC.

THE SCREEN

The James Bond films didn't start it. There were good movies about spies and counter-intelligence made from Graham Greene stories and movies on this subject made by Hitchcock and other bright directors even before Ian Fleming thought of writing his books about 007. But the Bond pictures have given the movement a tremendous push—for better or worse; and the trend with all the Bond imitators is threatening, with no end in sight, to get out of hand.

Perhaps the Bond movies are themselves getting out of hand. "Thunderball," the fourth and latest, is bigger, more expensive, more elaborate, and longer than the others in the series—but not better. It follows the same pattern: a rather thin, incredible plot decorated by some pretty girls, handsome Technicolor shots of various locales, violence, sex, and far-out gadgets. This time, the crime syndicate known as Spectre has stolen a couple of A-bombs and threatens to wipe out Miami unless ransom is paid. But Agent 007 (played of course by Sean Connery, who improves with each movie as he gets more cynical and weary) is on the ball; and the pursuit and dirty work and final victory take place in the lovely Bahamas. On the whole "Thunderball" strains too hard to be bigger in spectacle and special effects; and it needs cutting, especially in the excessive, though beautifully photographed, underwater scenes. After a while I, also, grew cynical and weary of the sick jokes, but I must admit one of them is a honey: a pretty Spectre agent is shot while dancing with Bond at a Bahama night spot; he drops her in a chair saying to the other drinkers, "Do you mind if my friend sits here? She's just dead."

If any film seems to be designed to end this secret agent cycle, it is "The Spy Who Came in from the Cold," which takes all the glamor out of spying and shows it up for the dehumanizing, unattractive business it really is. Although the picture is grim, glum and at times monotonous and difficult to follow (especially for those who have not read John le Carré's novel), producer-director Martin Ritt has handled its characters and complicated plot expertly, and the cast is excellent throughout. Richard Burton is practically perfect as the weary, disillusioned British agent, Leamas, who poses as a drunk and defector in order to frame Mundt, an East German intelligence chief whose staff has been particularly troublesome to the British. Understatement is the key to Ritt's direction, and Burton plays his role in such a low, tired tone that it seems to be the height of nonacting. But acting it is, and the character, who hates himself and his dirty work, is absorbing.

Also effective are Peter Van Eyck as Mundt, Oskar Werner as Mundt's Jewish assistant who questions and cross-questions Leamas until a near-friendship starts, Cyril Cusack as the British Control, Claire Bloom as the Communist who falls in love with Leamas, and many others in this large cast who drift in and out of the story as it moves from place to place. In spite of its gray, moody atmosphere, "The Spy" keeps growing in suspense. Entertainment the picture may not be, but as an exercise in spying and counter-spying and an exposé of the whole filthy business, "The Spy" is engrossing without insulting your intelligence.

"That Man in Istanbul" is not only a spoof on the

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James Bond movies but also a satire on the whole genre of chase films like "That Man from Rio" and "Topkapi." Set like "Topkapi" in Istanbul, it has some stunning color photography of that city and manages to cover every place including the waterfront in its wacky story about several groups of people interested in a kidnapped atom-scientist. And its international cast under director Antonio Isasi are fine. As far as I can make out, this is a French-Italian-Spanish film, and while some of its actors have only small roles, they manage to be properly daring or villainous in whatever they do. Sylva Koscina is very attractive as an American FBI agent who comes to look for the missing scientist and manages to get a somewhat shady owner of a gambling casino (Horst Buchholz) interested in the project when she mentions the million dollars ransom money. Horst isn't exactly Sean Connery, but he has a good sense of humor and sense of bounce which come in handy during all the mad chases. That he isn't as handsome or well-built as Connery is obvious in the many amusing scenes that require him to run around like Bond in his shorts; but when it comes to handling flip dialogue, he is often better than Connery. My only objection to "That Man" is its excessive length. The jokes get tired long before the chasers and chasees.

"Our Man Flint" is a more obvious imitation of the Bond stuff—complete with extravagant production, handsome color, involved gadgets and sets and a thin story that is only a prop for the scenes of violence and sex. However, I found James Coburn first rate in the title role and the man I'd choose to battle the villains of GALAXY who hope to ruin the world by messing around with the weather. Thanks to Flint, they don't succeed.

In "Where the Spies Are" David Niven plays the Bondish character. I found him pleasant and appealing, but a little old for the job—and perhaps for pretty Francois Dorleac too. But Niven has an amusing style, and even if I didn't believe in his karate, I did enjoy his *savoir faire*.

"Agent for H.A.R.M.," in which Mark Richman plays the investigating agent, is such a poor man's version of Bond you won't have to bother with it at all. It does serve one good purpose, however. Perhaps these cheesy imitations will polish off the whole trend. Or is that asking too much? Paramount now is making another item in the series, "The Last of the Secret Agents?" No doubt the question mark in the title is the clue to the whole thing.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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BOOKS

Elementary, my dear man

In Cold Blood

TRUMAN CAPOTE

Random House, $5.95

BERNARD MC CABE

During several weeks last fall readers of the *New Yorker* were treated to a lengthy factual account by Truman Capote of a multiple murder and the subsequent pursuit, capture, trial and ultimate execution of the murderers. This account is now published as a full-length book, *In Cold Blood*. A paperback edition is already projected, fifteen foreign translations are under way, and a movie is to be made. Mr. Capote, the New York *Times* tells us, will make an unprecedented $2,000,000 out of his work.

This true story opens one Saturday in November, 1959, when the Clutter family of Holcomb, a small town in the high wheat plains of western Kansas, is going about its good-natured, rather dull, small-town business. The father, in his late forties, is a much-respected farmer, a pious Methodist and prominent Republican, God-fearing and abstemious. The mother is a semi-invalid, subject to deep nervous depressions but recently much improved and looking forward to a happy Thanksgiving reunion. The son is an intelligent, original, but rather quiet and withdrawn 15-year old. The daughter, Nancy, nearly seventeen, is very charming, attractive, lively, healthy and innocent, everybody's favorite in this quiet, secure community.

Around midnight on that Saturday a car draws up at the Clutter farm, and two men in their late twenties from the other side of the state, recent parolees from the penitentiary at Lansing and utterly unknown to the Clutters, surprise the family, tie up father and son in downstairs rooms, mother and daughter in their beds. Dick and Perry, for those are their names, search the house, looking for a safe full of money they mistakenly believe is there. All they can find in various purses and wallets, is about forty-five dollars.

The father and mother plead with them not to hurt the children, but following a long-premeditated plan the young men kill all the family. Perry cuts the father's throat. Clutter struggles desperately and breaks some of his bonds, so Perry ends by shooting him in the head at very close quarters with a shotgun. One by one the others are similarly dealt with; the invalid mother, who has heard all, last. Each time the shot-gun shells are carefully retrieved. Half an hour after they have left the farm the two young men are roaring with laughter as they clean their blood-stained clothing. After a month of aimless wandering in stolen cars, to Mexico, back to Kansas, to Florida and to Las Vegas they are arrested, tried, convicted, and, in March 1965, after five years on death row, hanged at Leavenworth.

This tale is told in the familiar *New Yorker* documentary style – apparently deadpan, with a laconic piling up of objective detail. But Capote is an adept story-teller, using a skillful, high-speed cinematic "cutting" technique to switch back and forth from the worlds of the Clutter family, and later of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, to the terrible half-world in which two murderers live.

The recent past is reconstructed with clever unobtrusiveness, and below the surface the book hints at various complexities of attitude. This is most notable in the pitiful portraits of the two killers. Dick, who plans this "perfect score" is intelligent but evidently a criminal psychopath; he is sexually perverted, cruelly sadistic, emotionally dead, yet somehow desperately alive. And the account of Perry's terrible, deprived childhood, his hopeless tawdry dreams, his irrational fears, his strange lapses into tenderness, makes some appeal to the reader to reach a deeper imaginative understanding of what drove him to "make somebody pay." In the end the killers, the fateful pursuers of the first chapters, turn into victims themselves; they are as frightened and defenseless as the Clutters.

The book appears to be dealing with a poignant subject in a humane way. Why then is it so unpleasant? Partly because it is too consciously brilliant, bristling with Capote's felicities of timing and observation. But it is also ugly and meaningless. Ugly in a way that Flannery O'Connor for instance never is. She often springs to mind: a scene in a run-down Las Vegas motel, with a seventy-four year old blonde in high-heeled gold leather sandals, and another scene in which the killers pick up a twelve-year old boy who is walking with his dying grandfather through Louisiana and Texas, seem like life imitating Miss O'Connor's art. And in another way Perry and Dick's whole aimless journey from motel to motel, on a diet of chewing-gum, chocolate bars, root beer and hamburgers, with a bottle of ready-mix Orange Blossoms in the glove-compartment, recalls Nabokov's *Lolita*. But one also recalls these novelists' always quick presence, distilling meaning out of what is being observed. Beside them Capote's careful anonymity seems soggy. Nor is it a true anonymity; when he is not being tough he plays very hard for pathos (Nancy's abandoned old pony; Perry's miserable shoebox full of "souvenirs").

Pathos alternates with hard-bittenness. In a *Paris Review* interview Capote has said: "emotionality makes me lose writing control: I have to exhaust emotion before I feel clinical enough to analyze and project it, and as far as I'm concerned that's one of the laws of achieving true technique . . . . I believe the greatest intensity in art . . . is achieved with a deliberate, hard and cool head." Most of the time Capote keeps a very cool head; so cool that the

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title *In Cold Blood* begins to have ambiguous overtones. We are told that this work ("already hailed as a masterpiece") hopes to establish a new literary form: the Non-Fiction Novel. The form's obvious advantage is its immediacy; we are not being invited into fictional lives and deaths, into the reality of the imagination, but into the absorbing reality of flesh and blood. However, this can be an invitation to gloat, as when the flat detail of the Clutters' banal life is spiced with apprehensions of their violent death.

The striking frontispiece to *In Cold Blood* is a photograph of two pairs of disembodied eyes, blood-curdling eyes, presumably the murderers'. But they suggest something else – the voyeurism that runs through the book. From the opening scenes, when we are pressed to stare into the teen-aged Nancy's pink-and-white bedroom (where she will soon die begging for mercy) to the last scene of Perry's hanging, where the state investigator shuts his eyes "until he heard the thud-snap that announces a broken neck," the narrative prods and pries and watches. Nothing and nobody is spared. Although a full account of the murders is artfully held back until near the end of the book the girl Nancy's last cry – "Don't. Oh, please don't. Please. Please." – we can listen to that three times. Dick's decent mother, whose husband is dying of cancer, is led weeping from the court before her son is condemned to death. A reporter corners her, and the woman's excruciatingly pathetic childhood memories are there on the page for us (and for her, too?) to enjoy. The reconstructed private conversations between the killers ring very true in their cruel emptiness. But it is difficult not to be aware of Capote easing these memories out of Dick and Perry as they wait in the death cell. For our morose delectation.

The whole effect is voyeur. Capote, very efficiently, makes us part of the gaping crowd. We can watch through a two-way mirror as the police interrogate Dick on a minor charge. He doesn't know yet that they know what he's done. The trap is sprung; the Clutters are mentioned: "he turned gray. His eyes twitched." Then we watch the same process with Perry. And at the end we get a good intimate view of Death Row, all the details; the hangman is there to be looked at, too.

In Cold Blood's epigraph comes from François Villon, an appeal to pity: *"Car, se pitie de nous povres avez, Dieu en aura plus tost de vous mercis."* Maybe we are meant to view the two young men with a new compassion. Maybe also we are meant to deplore the rather perfunctory trial, the court's indifference to psychiatric evidence, the unexamined appeal, and finally the horrors of capital punishment. And so we should. But I don't think that's what this book is mostly about. The story's there for kicks, as in the *Police Gazette;* or, to put it more politely, for *frissons,* as sometimes in the *New Yorker.*

Fairy Tales

E. E. CUMMINGS

Harcourt, Brace, $4.50

MICHAEL RECK

In an age when most poets have been content to describe their private and surrounding hells, it has almost escaped notice that for forty years—until he died in September 1962—E. E. Cummings was writing a Paradise. The singeing satire—and no one could write more singeingly—was only the reverse side of this Paradise. Cummings would accept no fake paradises.

Now, after we thought we had heard the last of this very great poet, Harcourt, Brace & World has suddenly posthumously published *Fairy Tales,* stories Cummings had made for his "very little girl," his daughter Nancy. And they are what we might have expected of Cummings—and more. In short, they are some of the most beautiful stories this reviewer has ever read, and his opinion seems to be shared by his four-year-old son, who smiled with delight all the way through them.

Cummings had written: "but the proud power of (himself) Death immense/is not so great as is a little innocence," and this star guided him throughout his life. The four little stories in *Fairy Tales* are immense parables of innocence.

It is hard to choose among them, but I think I liked best "The Elephant and The Butterfly." It is a love story, and to enjoy it one need not know that Cummings considered the elephant his own totem. We find the butterfly knocking on the door of the elephant's house with his wings, and he has to knock several times because the elephant, inside, is so happy that he cannot speak.

Cummings once said of himself that because he had no sentimentality he was not afraid to write about love and death—and that is quite true. As an instance, we notice that in "The Elephant and The Butterfly" the elephant is "he" and the butterfly is also called "he." Cummings has obstinately refused to over-anthropomorphisize and sentimentalize his characters by calling the butterfly "she." And yet, in reading it, we have not the slightest doubt that this is a very heterosexual love story.

The illustrations, by John Eaton, are superb. With perhaps one exception, they keep beautifully that balance which Cummings himself kept for forty years: the delicate point at which one can move the sentiments to the point of tears *without* being sentimental.

A Dedicated Man and Other Stories

ELIZABETH TAYLOR

Viking, $4.95

BRIAN WILKIE

A possible first impression of Elizabeth Taylor's collection of short stories, *A Dedicated Man,* is of taut and acid satire which deals with a small segment of human experience. That is a false impression, but it is worth noting and perhaps it explains why some of Mrs. Taylor's readers like to think of her as a modern Jane Austen. Somehow Mrs. Taylor seems totally in control of her world, unruffled above the fuss in her characters' lives.

One feels this untroubled steadiness

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most in her style: "She liked conjectures about strangers rather than facts about acquaintances." "Her friend, Derek, would not do. He was too poor and too short." (Note the difference from "too short and too poor.") "She and Etta considered themselves to be rather worldly-wise—Etta having learnt from literature and Sarah from putting two and two together, her favorite pastime." Passages and sentences like these, written with lucid economy, with a keen ear for speech patterns, with unerring word choice that both renders a character's quality of mind and judges it, typify that alert composure which characterizes social satirists in the Austen tradition.

But many such satirists are writing today, particularly in England, and it is important to distinguish them and their often pale triumphs in a teapot from Elizabeth Taylor and what she does. For one thing, a retrospect of *A Dedicated Man* reveals that the scenery and people of her world are immensely varied: Athens, the Greek islands, North Africa, a variety of English settings; a wealthy businessman, an author of best-selling thrillers, kleptomaniacs, half-senile old women, an office girl, a hairdresser's assistant, a waiter "so snobbish that he looked down upon himself."

Furthermore, although Mrs. Taylor is almost constantly judging her characters implicitly, the judgments are never facile, never directed merely at departures from convention. Her condemned have all had fair trials, and they are guilty not of awkwardness or absurdity but of cruelty—either cruelty so commonplace that it passes as "just the way people are" or cruelty so shocking that it needs to be probed and accounted for.

Mrs. Taylor seldom allows us to gloss over the first type of cruelty, nor does she allow us to rest comfortably in simple outrage at the latter type. In "The Benefactress," a girl's dutiful, excruciatingly boring visits to her old aunt are shown to be shot through with banal cruelty and blindness to the old woman's real self and needs. In "In a Different Light," the angry and superior contempt felt by an expatriate Englishwoman toward English tourists is revealed uncompromisingly as the narrow-mindedness it really is. On the other hand, the hairdresser's assistant in "As if I Should Care" is a ruthless blackmailer milking her ailing and worried foster-parents, and yet, without at all exonerating the hateful little slut, Mrs. Taylor makes us feel, unsentimentally, the tragic stupidity of the foster-parents and the fetid atmosphere of sickness that cramps the girl's adolescent impulses toward release and a kind of beauty.

Many of the stories in *A Dedicated Man* have to do with the distrust and misunderstanding that exist between members of different generations; changes rung on this theme include almost all the possible combinations from childhood through decrepit old age.

Many of the younger people are charming, sophisticated, interesting, or complex; the older people are poignantly simple. And yet Mrs. Taylor does not see the conflict between age and youth as a simple one in which the experienced have learned lessons in kindness that the inexperienced have not learned; there is no such simple determinism in Mrs. Taylor's vision, and every person, young and old, remains responsible for his acts. The conflict between generations is part of a larger vision in which human beings are all morally free and yet conditioned

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by ingrained attitudes, the dynamics of growth, and the social scenery of their lives. The attitude that emerges from these stories is not that to understand all is to forgive all. It is, rather, that in order to pass any judgment, forgiveness or condemnation, one must first understand. Mrs. Taylor's firm and uncluttered judgments are based on complex insights and a fund of widely extended human sympathy. She is one of the very best short-story writers we have today.

Cork Street, Next to the Hatters

PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON

Scribner's, $4.95

BRUCE COOK

Pamela Hansford Johnson has now made it perfectly clear what she has been doing in her Dorothy Merlin books. The three of them – *The Unspeakable Skipton, Night and Silence Who Is Here?* and the present volume– comprise one long and delightful Victorian novel. What better proof of this can I give than to cite a chapter heading. Here is one chosen at random from *Cork Street:* "14. Shows the divers reactions of certain persons to a work of art, and a generous sporting gesture on the part of Cosmo Hines. Tom walks by night in St. James's Park."

In structure and general tone it is reminiscent of Thackeray, with bits of Trollope here and there. And two of the major characters – Daniel Skipton (drawn after the likeness of the notorious Frederick Rolfe, Baron Corvo) and of course Dorothy Merlin herself – are pure Dickens.

Dorothy is the monstrous poetess who stands at the center of this sprawling landscape of our age. The author of a verse play that enjoyed a certain critical success some years before, the wife of the proprietor of a smart bookshop, and self-styled earth mother, Dorothy Merlin personifies all the worst in Anglo-Saxon snob culture: she is a mean, hypocritical, sub-intellectual woman who pretends to be generous, open, and keenly rational.

Around her orbit a number of other, lesser bodies: her friends – the bad guys – and her enemies – the good ones. Dorothy's husband, Cosmo Hines, presents a sort of sub-category here: he is secretly one of her bitterest enemies – and thus secretly a good guy. Among his fellow Dorothy-haters are Matthew Pryar and his American wife Jane, who figure most prominently in *Night and Silence*, Pringle Milton, a new "face" created by photographer Duncan Moss, and Pringle's love, Tom Hariot.

The plot of *Cork Street, Next to the Hatter's*, is little more than framework on which Miss Johnson hangs a number of satirical and genuinely funny scenes which give rough treatment to the condition of England. But, such as it is, the plot treats the fortunes of one Tom Hariot, a university professor and an acquaintance of Dorothy's. Tom visits the theater one night with her and sees a revolting play of the Pinter-Beckett variety. He is so disgusted that he determines to write a play himself, one so unspeakably vile that it can never be presented in public production; such a play, he feels, would force the theater and the intellectual public to acknowledge at last that there are, after all, limits to what can be said and done on a public stage.

The play that Tom writes is titled *A Potted Shrimp*, and it seems to have just about everything – foul language, kicks in the groin, and sexual maltreatment of a. . . .of a *goose*, of all things. Well, needless to say, the play *is* produced – much to Tom's horror and Dorothy's delight. But it is precisely here, at the conclusion, that Miss Johnson's novel goes somewhat slack. It seems that just when she should be tying her threads into nice, neat Victorian knots, she begins to get them a bit snarled. And rather than spin things out to a proper resolution, she resorts to some rather shameful asides to the reader. For example, in the middle of a crucial scene between Tom and Pringle Milton, we are told: "(It is irrelevant to this story that within five years Tom, to his own astonishment, even disquiet, married a pretty and indigent widow with a son of two. . . .)" Yet it would be dishonest to be too severe on a passage that brought a laugh.

Although Miss Johnson has not accomplished the savaging she obviously intended, it is all fun and well worth the trouble. Since this is announced as the last of the Dorothy Merlin books, we can only regret that we will be seeing no more of the old monster-mother. One can even miss a rotter like Fagin, after all.

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REVIEWERS

BERNARD MC CABE *teaches English at Tufts University, Massachusetts.*

MICHAEL RECK, *a faculty member at the University of Puerto Rico, is now doing research in Germany under a fellowship.*

BRIAN WILKIE, *a frequent contributor, is the author of* Romantic Poets and Epic Tradition.

BRUCE COOK *contributes to a number of magazines, including* The Catholic World *and* The Critic.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 547*)

appear for a time chaotic and confused.

If these characteristics are lost, we may indeed have much social revolution but little else.

WILLIAM W. GOETZ

"The Logic of Religion"

Milwaukee, Wis.

To the Editors: Mr. Callahan, as usual ["The Logic of Religion" Dec. 17], has exposed a problem behind the problems other men are working on. He seeks a logic for the theology of our times. One man demythologizes biblical language, another translates Thomistic terms into the language of existential phenomenology, both seeking to make their theology relevant to their times. But so very few seem to realize that there is a mood among men today, an aggressive and optimistic attitude toward reality, that cannot join with traditional theology because integrity of life, action, and belief would break down under the strain.

It is really not too difficult to outline the opposing axioms of the logic of traditional theology and the stance of modern Americans. The former may be sketched quickly: poverty, chastity, obedience, prayer, sacrifice. The latter: the creation of wealth in the world, release of man's physical expressiveness for the sake of interpersonal communication, freedom and self-determination, action, self-fulfillment. It would not be too difficult to give traditional but reasonable explanations of how to reconcile these two sets of axioms. The logic of such explanations could be cogent and coherent. But there is a deeper "logic" which Mr. Callahan rightly seeks.

Can the Christian with his present value system praise human initiative, independence, quest for fulfillment, the love that is not one-sided charity but mutual union, activism, without judging them in terms of the older, spiritual values? For theology to have an inner consistency with today's man, it must be the modern values just listed that are the criteria for judging traditional Christian theology and spirituality. A deep-rooted attitude towards life will always, *de facto*, sit in judgment on any set of ideas, including theological ideas. If the attitudes towards life and self of two theologians cannot be reconciled, then neither can their theologies.

I suspect that Mr. Callahan (along with myself and many others) finds this world and human values full of quite marvelous potentials. We (if I may presume to say "we") cannot probably call ourselves New Breed because Fr. Greeley doesn't allow people who can form an ideology into the New Breed. Yet the New Breed as well as those of Mr. Callahan's ilk (useful word, that) share, I believe, a common experience and conviction – that most of the traditional values of Christian theology are merely means to achieve those more positive values which the modern American cherishes.

For example, obedience is a necessary

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and constructive force in human life, but only because the *higher* good, responsible freedom, is not yet a common possession of man. If the idea of obedience is not going to become a monstrous end in itself it must foster freedom, acknowledging freedom as a greater good than obedience. And to those who indicate that obedience to God is better than the independence of freedom, it must be said that love of God, a *free* decision for God, is far greater than obedience towards Him.

CONTINUUM

Quarterly

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For another example, traditional spirituality presents prayer as that which leads ideally to mystic union as an end in itself – union with God. The New Breed *et al.* view is that prayer is only a means to effecting and activating Christian life which, to be authentic, must express itself in what is greater than prayer – the communication of one's Christian self to others, that Christ may be more present among men. The law of love of fellow-men sits in judgment upon the use to which prayer is put. To again counter an objection, prayer does not equal love of God, so that love of man can be given second place to prayer as the love of God. God is more loved in other men, in community, in Church, in sacrament, than in private prayer. Otherwise the Eucharist would have to take second place to private prayer.

There are more things to be said, but too many words have already been used. The basic problem remains. Can theology come to be consistent with the life stance of modern man, or must the values of modern man be judged negatively by theology. I believe the former is possible. I am afraid that the latter will continue to be attempted.

MICHAEL BARNES

"The New Morality"

Gambier, Ohio

To the Editors: At the risk of appearing ecumenically disruptive, may I suggest that the fundamental issue in the very stimulating exchange between Professor Fletcher and Father McCabe is not the relativism or absolutism of moral judgments, but the interrelation of individual and community in making such judgments: in some sense the traditional Protestant/Catholic dialogue.

Father McCabe seems to me to confuse the issue by advancing two mutually contradictory positions – (a) certain behavior is always wrong under any circumstances, and (b) the value of my behavior is "its meaning in the total system of communications which is the human world." He then, for the major part of his article, ignores (a) and works with (b) – as even the most adamant of the absolutists have done in practice.

Killing babies by roasting them alive was accepted under the "just war" theory as morally defensible long before napalm bombs were invented. Babies who were incinerated in Hamburg, Tokyo or Hiroshima suffered just as much as if they had been the victims of private bestiality; but I do not believe that Catholic airmen were expected to confess their deeds as mortal sins. There is absolutely no objective, neurological difference between the act of coitus outside marriage and the same act within marriage; but in one instance Father McCabe would repudiate it and in the other he would approve of it because of the personal commitment of the couple and the blessing of the Church. Even intercourse with a person to whom you are not in fact married is not (as far as I know) regarded by Catholic moralists as sinful if the individual believes himself or herself to be married but, for example, it is later discovered that the bond was null and void because of an undisclosed impediment.

Professor Fletcher in his rejoinder makes it clear that the situationist, as distinct from the "antinomian existentialist," also subscribes to position (b) and is seeking "the greatest amount of love for the greatest number of neighbors possible." However for him – and this is where the real disagreement lies – the individual has to accept the ultimate responsibility of making a judgment about the relative values of his personal happiness and freedom and the good of society. Individual exceptions to the common mind of Christendom are at least occasionally (and perhaps too readily) expected and justified.

For Father McCabe, on the other hand, it is part of Christian commitment to accept the superior wisdom of the Church (however historically conditioned). Individual decisions to act contrary to the norm of the community are always wrong. Yet in his final paragraphs he makes a point which might provide a basis for *rapprochement* – when he suggests that actions that are socially wrong may be personally blameless. Would

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Professor Fletcher accept this distinction? RICHARD F. HETTLINGER

The Winner?

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: Thank you for publishing the fine exchange of ideas between Joseph Fletcher and Herbert McCabe on "The New Morality" (January 14).

I found Mr. Fletcher's articles especially enlightening, and I would vote for him as the winner of the "debate." Not only has he presented the case for situation ethics very well, but he has also gotten down to the real difference between the old and the new moralities: nominalism versus essentialism. He makes no bones of the fact that he is a nominalist; the scholastic notion of "property" has no meaning for him, and logically he must say that "goodness or rightness is a predicate of actions, not a property of them."

Father McCabe, it seems to me, has failed to understand Mr. Fletcher's position. He has not really put himself into the shoes of the nominalist. Father McCabe, as an essentialist, is preoccupied with definitions. He is concerned about how Mr. Fletcher will define love and caring. I submit that one source of his concern is a prejudice; namely, that reason and abstract thinking in the scholastic sense are the only way of arriving at truth, and that searching for truth is a searching for essences.

From my limited experience as a priest, I would judge that people at heart are followers of situation ethics. Without knowing how to define love or how to express his actions in scholastic terms, a man by intuition or instinct knows when his actions are good or bad. Perhaps this is what is meant by the expression "natural goodness." He may tell a lie to prevent an evil, but he feels he has done the right thing, and he does not understand when an essentialist tells him he has done wrong. His motive was good, and the consequences of his action were good. Something he does not understand has intervened — the nature of the act in itself. Try to convince a man that respecting "the nature of the act in itself" is more important than preventing human suffering.

This, I think, is a crucial point. In cases of conflict, the essentialist favors an abstraction which is his own creation, i.e., the nature of the act in itself, over consequences. How can he be so sure of himself? The only authority he has is his own mind. The Church has not and cannot settle the controversy between essentialists and nominalists, and yet in practice, we are expected to be essentialists, no matter what the consequences.

(REV.) JAMES R. SCHEFE

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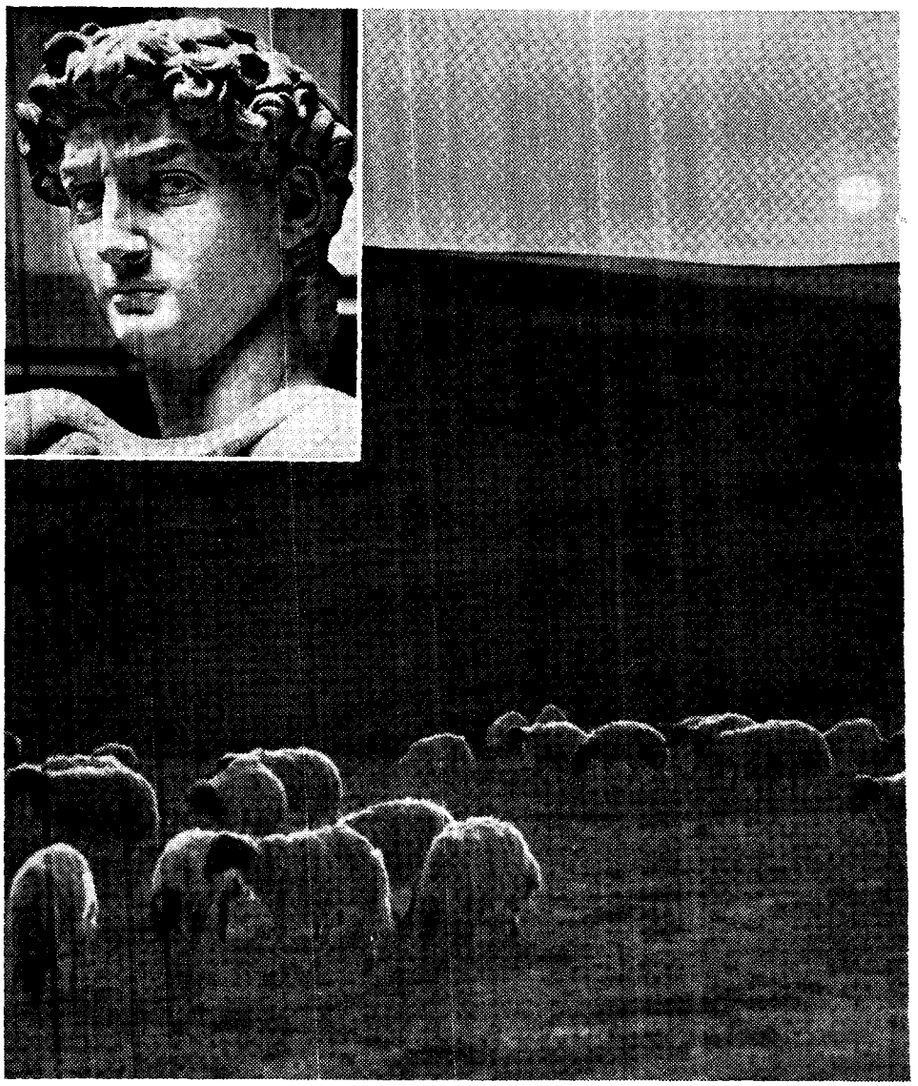

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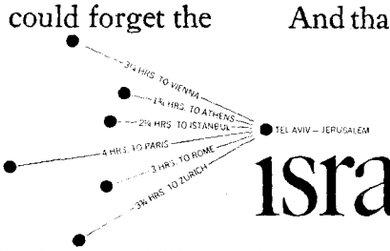

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